

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 EB-08 FEAE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00
ACDA-07 /062 W

-----281511Z 028894 /53

O 281215Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4404

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TEHREN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 7139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG UR

SUBJECT: EGYPT PUBLISHES SOVIET WARNING ON LIBYA

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REF: SANA 1617 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: CAIRO PRESS APRIL 28 CARRIES TEXT OF SOVIET
DEMARCHE TO ARAB CAPITALS, NOT INCLUDING CAIRO, WARNING
EGYPT AGAINST MILITARY "ADVENTURE" IN LIBYA. EDITORIALS
ATTACH SOVIET INITIATIVE VIGOROUSLY, CHARGING "FLAGRANT

INTERVENTION" IN ARAB AFFAIRS AND UNACCEPTABLE ASSUMPTION BY SOVIETS OF ROLE QADHAFI'S PROTECTOR. FAHMY HAD "TOUGH" MEETING WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR APRIL 27; SOIVET RESPONSE PRESUMABLY IMPELLED FAHMY TO "EXPOSE" SOVIETS IN MEDIA (A FAVORITE GOE TACTIC). FIRM EGYPTIAN REACTION TO SCARCELY VEILED SOVIET WARNING PUTS BILATERAL RELATIONS AT NEW NADIR. IT PROBABLY TOO EARLY JUDGE EFFECTIVENESS MOSCOW WARNING AGAINST ALLEGED EGYPTIAN "AGRESSIVE" INTENT TOWARD LIBYA. END SUMMARY.

1. HEADLINE NEWS APRIL 28 IN CAIRO IS GOE "REVLATION" THAT SOVIET AMBASSADORS IN "NUMBER OF ARAB COUNTRIES", BUT NOT EGYPT, HAVE DELIVERED MEMORANDUM CHARING EGYPT WITH AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS TOWARD LIBYA. PRESS CALLS THIS SOVIET INITIATIVE A "GRAVE SOVIET PLOT" (GUMHURIYYA RED BANNER).

2. SOVIET CHARGE "FULL TEXT" OF SOVIET MEMORANDUM AS PUBLISHED LOCALLY (SEE SEPTEL) CHARGES EGPTIAN MILITARY BUILDUP IN WESTERN DESERT DESIGNED PROVOKE ARMED CLASH WITH LARG AND ENCOURAGE INTERNAL DISSENSION WITHIN LIBYA. IF SUCH "MILITARY ADVENTURE" SHOULD OCCUR, RESULTING TENSION WOULD ONLY SERVE ISRAEL AND ITS SUPPORTERS. WHATEVER GOE PURPOSE, WHETHER "TO LAY HANDS ON LIBYAN OIL OR DIVERT ATTENTION EGYPTIAN PEOPLE FROM EGYPT'S OWN INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES," GOE MUST BEAR GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE (UNSPECIFIED) CONSEQUENCES. ARAB STATES SHOULD ENDEAVOR PREVENT "FURTHER HASTY ACTIONS" BY GOE.

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3. PUBLIC EGYPTIAN RESPONSE. "WELL INFORMED EGYPTIAN SOURCES" ARE QUOTED IN PRESS AS DENOUNCING THIS "FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO ARAB STATES." FACT THAT, "CONTRARY NORMAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE," MESSAGE NOT DELIVERED BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN CAIRO, REVEALS "GRAVITY OF NEW (SOVIET) PLAN." SAME "RELIABLE SOURCES" DESCRIBE SOVIET ALLEGATION THAT EGYPT SEEKS CONTROL LIBYAN OIL AS NO MORE THAN SOVIET EFFORT IMPOSE "TUTELAGE ON LIBYA AND COL. QADHAFI PERSONALLY" AND TO GAIN CONTROL OF LIBYAN NATURAL RESOURCES. BY SUCH "UNPRECEDENTED BEHAVIOR," SOVIETS INTEND "DIVIDE ARAB RANKS." SINCE MEMO NOT FROMALLY PRESENTED TO GOE, OFFICIAL SOURCES SAY NO "PRACTICAL" GOE STAND HAS BEEN DEVELOPED.

4. EDOTORIAL ANALYSIS. AHARAM COMMENTARY MAKES SEVERAL POINTS:
(A) QADHAFI NOW SO WEAK AT HOME HE REQUIRES SUPERPOWER PROTECTOR;

(B) SOVIETS HAVE VILLATED DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL BY GOING

BEHIND GOE'S BACK ON LIBYAN ISSUES;

(C) SOVIET SUPPORT FOR QADHAFI, WHO PLOTTING ASSASSINATIONS
AND BOMB THROWING IN EGYPT, REVEALS SOVIET HOSTILITY TO
EGYPTIAN PEOPLE.

(D) SOVIETS, WHO HAVE NOW CLEARLY DECLARED THEY HAVE TAKEN
QADHAFI UNDER USSR PROTECTION, ARE CONSEQUENTLY ALSO
PLAYING NEW ROLE OF "INTRUDERS" INTO PURELY ARAB AFFAIRS.

(E) CHARGE EGYPT WORKING AGAINST QADHAFI IN ORDER GET AT
LIBYAN OIL IS ABSURD, SINCE SOVIETS KNOW EGYPT COULD HAVE
OBTAINED "MOST OF OIL INCOME" IF GOE HAD RESPONDED TO
ADHAFI'S DEMANDS.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 CAIRO 7139

(F) SOVIET REFERENCE TO OIL THUS REFLECTS SOVIET GREED,
NOT EGYPTIAN GREED. MOSCOW PLAYS SIMILAR GAMES IN IRAQ,
KUWAIT AND IRAN, SEEKING OBTAIN ACCESS THEIR OIL FIELDS
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IN RETURN FOR SOVIET ARMS. SIMILARLY IN AFRICA (ANGOLA,
ZAIRE, ETHIOPIA) SOVIETS HAVE THEIR EYE ON RICH MINERAL
RESOURCES.

(G) CHARGE EGYPT AGAINST QADHAFI'S "NATIONALIZATION POLICY"
IS NONSENSE, SINCE QADHAFI HAS NOT TOUCHED "THE LARGE
AMERICAN OIL COMPANIES." FURTHER, QADHAFI WAS ONLY ARAB
TO ABSTAIN FROM PARTICIPATING IN OIL EMBARGO; INSTEAD HE
MADE PROFITS AT EXPENSE OF OTHER ARABS.

(H) CLAIM EGYPTIAN POLICY AGAINST QADHAFI HINDERS STRUGGLE
AGAINST ISRAEL IS EQUALLY ABSURD, SINCE QADHAFI HAS NOT
PARTICIPATED IN STRUGGLE, DURING TIME OF PEACE OR OF WAR.

5. FAHMY/POLYAKOV. FAHMY TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR LATE
APRIL 27 ON ANOTHER MATTER, AND NOTED IN PASSING THAT
HIS TWO HOUR MEETING WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR POLYAKOV THAT
AFTERNOON HAD BEEN "TOUGH"." AMBASSADOR ASKED IF POLYAKOV HAD
"APOLOGIZED," AS FAHMY HAD PREVIOUSLY INSISTED HE DO, BUT FAHMY
DID NOT GIVE STRAIGHT ANSWER. FAHMY STAFFER TOLD EMBOFF EVENING
APRIL 27 THAT SOVIET HAD STILL PROVIDED NO "REAL" RESPONSE
TO FAHMY'S HARD QUESTIONS.

6. LOCAL BLOC ATTITUDE. AT RECEPTION EVENING APRIL 27
(BEFORE CAIRO APRIL 28 MORNING NEWSPAPER HAD APPEARED), TOPIC
NOT RAISED BY ANY OF SOVIET, EAST GERMAN, POLISH, ROMANIAN,
OR HUNGARIAN POLOFFS IN ATTENDANCE. BULGARIAN EMBOFF, HOWEVER,
SINGLED OUT ONE OF US EMBOFFS TO SAY SOVIETS HAD
DELIVERED STRONG MESSAGE TO "EVERY" ARAB LEAGUE CAPITAL
OTHER THAN CAIRO, WARNING OF EGYPTIAN INTENTION ATTACK
LIBYA. "SOME PEOPLE ARE SAYING", BULGARIAN ADDED, THAT USG IS
RESTRAINING GOE. EMBOFF EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT NEWS SUCH
SOVIET INITIATIVE, OBSERVED USG HAS ALWAYS INSISTED INTER-
NATIONAL DISPUTES SHOULD NOT BE SETTLED BY FORCE, AND ASKED
IF SOVIET DECISION, AS DESCRIBED BY BULGARIAN, TO TAKE AN
ARAB STATE UNDER ITS PUBLIC PROTECTION IS NOT CURIOUS NEW
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ROLE FOR USSR. IN RESPONSE, BULGARIAN WRYLY RECALLED USSR
DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR EGYPT AT TIME OF 1956 SUEZ LANDINGS.

7. COMMENT: IT STILL NOT CLEAR TO WHICH CAPITALS OTHER
THAN SANA (REFTEL) AND AMMAN SOVIETS HAVE PRESENTED THEIR
DEMARCHE. CURIOUS METHOD OF REPRESENTATIONS TO ARAB CAPZITALS
OTHER TAN CAIRO IS PUZZLING TO US AND, WE THINK, TO GOE.
WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN EMBASSY MOSCOW ASSESSMENT SOVIET
DECISION NOT TO APPROACH EITHER USG OR GOE.

8. WHATEVER SOVIET MOTIVES MAY HAVE BEEN RE METHOD OF
DELIVERY, PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM WOULD APPEAR TO BE
STRAIGHTFORWARD; I.E., HANDS OFF LIBYA. SUCH SCARCELY WEILED
THREAT AND FIRM GOE REACTION HAS, OBVIUSLY, PLUMMETTED
EGYPTIAN/SOVIET RELATIONSHIP TO NEW NADIR. IT MAY BE TOO EARLY
JUDGE EFFECTIVENESS SOVIET WARNING ON PUTATIVE EGYPTIAN
MILITARY DECISIONS RE LIBYA. ON PACE PROCESS, AGGRAVATED
CAIRO/MOSCOW STRAINS MAY MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR FAHMY
TO CONTINUE HIS HERETOFORE RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC
BALANCING ACT, A MIXTURE OF TOUGHNESS ON SOVIET INCURSIONS
IN AFRICA AND WARM WELCOME FOR OSTENSIBLE AND/OR REAL
SOVIET EFFORTS SPEED CONVENING OF MEPC (GOE SEEKS ENSURE
SOVET CO-CHAIRMAN NOT BE UNNECESSARILY HOSTILE TOWARD EGYPT
AT GENEVA.)

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Message Attributes

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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: DEMARCHE, INTERVENTION, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO07139
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: CAIRO
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SANA 1617
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2670755
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPT PUBLISHES SOVIET WARNING ON LIBYA SECRET SECRET
TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR, LY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/db2d3e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009